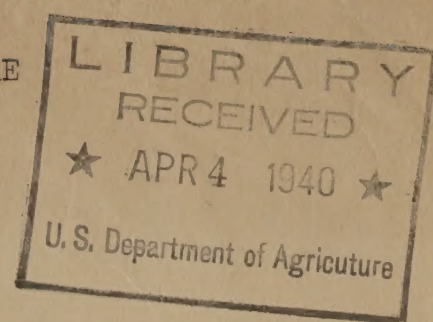


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MIGRATION TO CALIFORNIA, 1930-40



Approximately 1,250,000 persons migrated to California from other states during the years 1930 to 1939, according to population estimates released by the Bureau of Agricultural Economics. The Bureau's estimate is based on preliminary findings of a comprehensive study of migration and resettlement problems in five far-western states (California, Arizona, Oregon, Washington, and Idaho) which the Bureau has been conducting over the past year and a half in cooperation with the Farm Security Administration and various state agencies.

While migration to California since 1930 has been of substantial magnitude, it is, nevertheless, much smaller in numbers than the movement which occurred during the 1920's. More than two million people moved to California from other states during the ten years from 1920 to 1930, as compared with a migration of about one and a quarter million persons during the last decade. Statements frequently made to the effect that the migration to California during the 'thirties was unprecedented, have no basis in fact. Actually, the movement to California during the past 10 years has been less by several hundred thousand persons than the migration of the earlier decade. In terms of proportions the difference between the two decades is even greater. Migrants to California during the 1920's increased the state's population by more than 60 percent; whereas the newcomers since 1930 have amounted to only a little more than a fifth (22 percent) of California's 1930 population.

In California, the state Department of Education cooperated with the Federal Bureau in an enumeration of all children in public schools whose families moved to California since January 1, 1930. This survey enumerated more than 186,000 children representing nearly 116,000 families which moved into the state during the years 1930 to 1939. While these families include only those with children in school, they are believed to be fairly representative of the entire migrating group, with respect to origins, occupations, and present location in California.

The majority of the newcomers are located in southern California, more than 45 percent being reported from Los Angeles County alone. Other leading counties are San Diego with 5.4 percent of the state total; Alameda with 4.7 percent; San Francisco with 4 percent; and Kern and Tulare with slightly more than 3 percent each. Contrary to popular impression, the interior valleys have not received an unduly large proportion of the newcomers to the state. In 12 principal valley counties (Kern, Tulare, Kings, Fresno, Madera, Merced, Placer, Sacramento, San Joaquin, Stanislaus, Yolo, Yuba) the school survey enumerated 20,279 migrant families or slightly more than 17 percent of the total state enumeration. The four urban counties of Los Angeles, San Diego, Alameda, and San Francisco reported almost 60 percent of all migrant families enumerated

in the school survey. In sharp contrast to this concentration of newcomers in metropolitan areas, the 40 northern-most counties (with the exception of San Francisco and Alameda) reported less than 20 percent of the state total of enumerated migrant families.

While public attention has been focused on the migration of distressed agricultural workers from the South Plains states, this was by no means the only group involved in recent population movement to the Pacific Coast. Migrants to California have been drawn from virtually all occupations -- farmers and farm laborers, skilled workmen, white-collar workers, business and professional people, and many others. Of the 20,000 odd migrant family heads in the 12 interior valley counties previously mentioned, more than half had been engaged in non-agricultural pursuits prior to migrating to California. Only 38 percent were reported to be engaged in agriculture in California, chiefly as farm laborers. Thus, two wide-spread beliefs -- that the migration of the past decade has been predominantly of agricultural origin, and that the bulk of the incoming migrants have sought agricultural employment in California -- are not supported by the findings of the Bureau's study. More than half of the inter-state migrants to California's central valley were non-agricultural before migration and there has been a net shift out of agriculture in connection with the relocation of the migrant group in California.

Since the occupational data discussed above apply only to the principal agricultural area of California, it is almost certain that when the more highly industrialized areas are included in the analysis, the agricultural proportions of the migrant population in the state as a whole, will be found to be somewhat smaller. Obviously, these facts of geographic and occupational distribution of the migrant group are of great importance to public policies aimed at solution of the social problems attendant on recent migrations.
